Following Jesus
Christians debate the best way to be the church and reach our world

Also
Republican Power Broker Bob Vander Plaats
The Wedding Gift
Three-peat
Mel Babcock, Val Kleinjan and Jessica Wedel (from left) celebrate the Raiders’ third consecutive national title—and fifth overall.

On the cover:
Followers of Jesus don’t always see eye-to-eye on how best to live out their faith.

18 Changing Church
Concern about reaching today’s postmodern generation has resulted in a critique of evangelicalism and a new commitment to the message of the gospel.

26 Political Power Broker
When Rick Santorum won the Iowa Republican caucuses in January—and was elevated to the status of Mitt Romney’s main competition—Bob Vander Plaats deserved some of the credit.

27 The Wedding Gift
Natsuki Nagakawa became so close to her Northwestern host family that she paid for their trip to her wedding in Japan.
Above All

Five years ago, as a candidate for Northwestern's presidency, one of the first documents I became familiar with was the *Vision for Learning*, which articulates the four goals we have for graduates of NWC. We want them to:

1. Trust, love and worship God
2. Engage ideas
3. Connect knowledge and experience
4. Respond to God’s call

I still remember being struck by the fact that the first goal listed was for our graduates to trust, love and worship God. That spoke volumes to me about Northwestern's values. Few institutions of higher education share this value, much less articulate it so prominently.

We want our graduates prepared to contribute to society through meaningful work, but above all, we want them to know that abundant life flows out of a love relationship with Jesus. As the Gospel of Mark says, "What do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?"

We want our graduates to show the world how to live a God-centered life. We want them to model it in the classroom, across campus, and in their churches and communities.

There are many things that make Northwestern graduates stand out from the crowd, but perhaps none is as distinctive as their understanding of all of life as worship. This worldview is what compels them to be lifelong learners and Christ followers. It spurs them to pursue excellence in their professional and personal lives—because excellence offered out of faith and love for God is worshipful.

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May the Lord’s amazing grace continue to be with our community as together we seek to fulfill this goal. We want our graduates prepared to contribute to society through meaningful work, but above all, we want them to know that abundant life flows out of a love relationship with Jesus. As the Gospel of Mark says, “What do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?”

May the Lord’s amazing grace continue to be with our community as together we seek to fulfill this goal. We want our graduates prepared to contribute to society through meaningful work, but above all, we want them to know that abundant life flows out of a love relationship with Jesus. As the Gospel of Mark says, “What do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?”

Warm Winter Welcome

Fifteen seniors from Meiji Gakuin Higashimurayama High School in Tokyo spent two weeks on campus in January, enhancing their English skills and learning about life in the U.S. As compared by their English instructor, Norimichi Odate ’80, the students took classes in real English and American culture four hours a day, with an additional three hours of tutoring by Northwestern students.

“The students are still talking about their experience and would love to come back,” says Odate. “The staff and students at Northwestern welcomed us so warmly. The tutors were patient and a great help, not just in studying but also in adjusting to and understanding American life.”

The boys stayed with area families while the girls roomed with NWC students in Hospers Hall. Assignments to interview Northwestern students during mealtimes helped the visitors hone their English skills and develop relationships. Exposure to life in the Midwest included a weekend trip to Minneapolis.

Among the English Training Camp’s staff were Kathy Gabal ’80 and Kristyn Howse ’80, daughters of the late Dr. Lyle VanderWerff ’54, longtime religious professor and director of international programs who established many sister-school relationships with Asian colleges and coordinated Northwestern’s Summer Institute for International Students.

Odate credits VanderWerff for encouraging him to go on to seminary and helping to instill within him a passion for reaching others for Christ. “It is so amazing to see how things work in God’s plan,” says Odate, about returning to campus with Japanese high school students decades after his own NWC experiences.

Officials hope to continue the English training camp in the future.

Passing Grade

With the national pass rate for actuarial exams at below 50 percent, what’s the probability that the four Northwestern students who took exams last year would pass every one? Seniors Kristen Humphrey, Abby Korthal and Jacob Vander Ploeg and junior Nathan Neustedt undoubtedly could come up with the answer. They each have passed two of the exams—probability and financial mathematics—that are required before they can begin practicing as actuaries. The 2011 national pass rates were 42 percent on the probability exam and 49 percent on financial mathematics.

Northwestern is one of just 84 colleges or universities nationwide with an “advanced undergraduate” actuarial science classification from the Society of Actuaries. The current placement rate of Northwestern’s actuarial science graduates is consistently near 100 percent. Actuarial alumni are working in firms across the U.S., including at Modern Woodmen of America in Omaha, Principal Financial Services in Des Moines and The Segal Company in Chicago.

In Box

Impressed

Twice this year, I have been impressed with the *Classic* feature articles on “The Concert and the Cross” (Summer 2011) helping me with a 9/11 sermon on reaching out to Muslim people around us. We have a large mosque a block away in Union City, N.J. The photography in that issue was so helpful, I shared it with the whole congregation at Grove Reformed.

[The article on] DNA and genetic research (Spring 2011) was informative and courageous—and helpful for my tech people and young adults.

Enclosed is a donation to say keep up your commitment to build a spiritual dimension in your student education and action projects—and in what you continue offering in the *Classic*.

Rev. Mel Van Hattum
Harrison, N.J.

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Send letters to: Classic, Northwestern College, 101 7th Street SW, Orange City, IA 51041; email: classic@prowessa.edu. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Please include an address and daytime phone number.
More than 200 Northwestern students, faculty and staff spent their spring break putting love into action.

This year’s Spring Service Projects March 3–12 included three international sites—in Nicaragua, the Netherlands and Haiti—and 10 U.S. destinations. Of those, two were new to the SSP program. Northwestern partnered with one of its alumni, Kristie (De Boer ’95) Mompremier, who with her Haitian husband, JeanJean, established United Christians International in Haiti’s central plateau. Also for the first time, a team traveled to Jacksonville, Fla., to work with 2nd Mile Ministries, a Christian community development organization.

Other states that were SSP destinations included Texas, Minnesota, South Carolina, Louisiana, Mississippi and Arkansas. There teams helped with construction projects, led vacation Bible school, interacted with ex-prisoners, taught English to refugees, partnered with a Native American church, served at a homeless shelter, learned about racial reconciliation, worked in a health clinic, and tutored inner-city youth.

Advisers for this year’s Spring Service Projects included six Northwestern alumni: Rebecca (James ’07) Alsum, Karla Arevalo ’10, Lanet Hane ’10, Carrie (Carlson ’95) Krohn and Janelle (de Waard ’11) Silva, all of whom work at NWC; and Crystal Clark ’02, who volunteered to advise the nursing students who worked at the health clinic.

 Hearts of Service

Northwestern has sent a Spring Service Project team to Bluefields, Nicaragua, since 2003. This year students also traveled to the Netherlands, Haiti and 10 U.S. sites, where they loved others by serving them in Jesus’ name.

Summer School in Cyberspace

Northwestern’s A cappella Choir performed throughout the Midwest during a spring break tour March 2–12. The 43-member ensemble presented 12 concerts in churches, high schools and a care center in Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Travel Notes

Northwestern’s A cappella Choir performed throughout the Midwest during a spring break tour March 2-12. The 43-member ensemble presented a dozen concerts in churches, high schools and a care center in Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Among the sites the choir visited were churches pastored by alumni, including Clint Hogrefe ’97, Merna, Iowa; Jason Blaha ’09, McBain, Mich.; Todd Schnied ’93, Grand Rapids, Mich.; and Gery Norman ’77, Morrison, Ill. They also performed at Sheboygan Falls High School in Wisconsin, where Derek Beekhuizen ’02 is a music teacher.

March 30 through April 1, the Symphonic Band performed an abbreviated tour in Sioux Falls and Mitchell, S.D.

The A cappella Choir presented a wide variety of music on their spring tour, including spirituals, settings of two children’s poems written in a World War II prison camp, animal songs and pieces from Eastern Europe.
Book Ends

Biblical Storytelling

Theatre professor Jeff Barker is the author of The Storytelling Church: Adventures in Reclaiming the Role of Story in Worship, which is the inaugural publication of Webber Institute Books, in association with Parson’s Porch Books. An experienced worship leader, Barker says among the challenges the church faces are these three: first, effective telling of God’s story, revealed in the Bible; second, reclaiming of the story of Christianity today, manifested through God’s work in our lives and communities; and third, giving a story structure to worship services.

“In worship, we mostly just read Scripture,” says Barker, who believes the story of salvation is embodied through biblical storytelling as well as embodying the music and movement often referred to in Scripture.

In addition, Barker believes worship should include the stories of congregants. “How can we really know each other—grieve together and rejoice together—if we don’t know each other’s stories?”

Higher Math

Mathematics professor Dr. Elin Jonsson is among 10 members of the Association of Christians in the Mathematical Sciences (ACMS) who contributed to a new book, Mathematics Through the Eyes of Faith. Published by HarperOne and co-sponsored by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, the book invites readers to consider the rich intersection of mathematics and Christian belief. The authors examine both secular scholarship and theology as they explore issues such as the relationship between chance and divine providence and whether or not mathematical concepts point to a higher reality.

Jonsson, who is currently serving as president of ACMS, co-authored three of the chapters: “Infinity,” “Dimensions,” and “Proof and Truth.” The volume was edited by Calvin College’s Dr. James Bradley and Westminster College’s Dr. Russell Howell.

Bishop’s Voice

The concerns of a fourth-century bishop are brought to light in a new book written by Dr. Robert Winn, history. Eusebius of Emesa: Church and Theology in the Mid-Fourth Century has been published by The Catholic University of America Press.

“Eusebius was staking out a religious identity for Christians, addressing issues of what they should believe and how they should live at a time in which they were participating in a story that should be communicated through their daily life,” says Winn. “Eusebius was staking out a religious identity for Christians, addressing issues of what they should believe and how they should live at a time in which they were participating in a story that should be communicated through their daily life.”

In Winn’s analysis of Eusebius’ sermons, which survive in Latin and Armenian, he discovered four prominent theological concerns: the natural world and human nature, the nature of God, the divinity and humanity of Christ, and asceticism and the church.

Winn will focus on translating some of Eusebius’ sermons from Latin into English while on sabbatical next year.

Iowa to Ethiopia

The first time it happened, the actors were a little startled. Before the end of the play, a standing ovation. Again and again during their 13 performances in Addis Ababa, students and alumni in Northwestern’s Drama Ministries Ensemble (DME) paused their performance as Ethiopian audience members leapt to their feet to clap and cheer when the character Arlene proclaimed, “… the Lion of Judah … the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords … His name is Jesus.”

The actors, along with DME director Jeff Barker and Arlene Schuiteman, former missionary to Ethiopia, performed Jesus Ethiopia, a play Barker wrote about Schuiteman, a nurse missionary to Ethiopia in the 1970s.

In the play, Schuiteman—who celebrated her 88th birthday during their years there—a revival that touched her personally and resulted in some surprising gifts of the Holy Spirit in her life. In addition to sharing Schuiteman’s story, the drama also tells the story of Judaism and Christianity in Ethiopia, from the Queen of Sheba—who visited Solomon and is rumored to have borne his son—to the Ark of the Covenant, which many, including Schuiteman, believe rests in Ethiopia today.

“…”It was so different to perform the play there,” says sophomore Jackson Nickolay. “In the U.S., it’s a story of a missionary who dedicated her life to God. But in Ethiopia, it became a retelling of the history of the country and its evangelical movement. You could feel the difference in the audience as we talked about events—like the Red Terror genocide—they actually lived through.”

Was it inevitable?

Known you’d be a Raider since your mom warmed your bald little head with red?

Everyone’s road to NWC is different. Tell us how you wound up at Northwestern for a future story in the Classic.

classic@nwc.iowa.edu • 712-707-7118.

Best in the Class

What colleges have the best professors? According to a story on chron.com, Northwestern College is among them. In a ranking of “25 Colleges With the Best Professors,” CBS listed NWC 11th—ahead of every Ivy League school and all state universities. The ranking was based on data compiled by RateMyProfessors.com.

The list is heavily represented by liberal arts colleges, with Oklahoma Wesleyan University ranked No. 1, followed by the Air Force Academy and the Military Academy.
Beautiful Minds

Class
Topics in the History of Mathematics

Instructor
Dr. Kim Jongerius
Professor of Mathematics

The Pythagorean theorem is taught in countless classrooms around the globe, but rarely do classes take time to learn about the man behind the math. “Generally, mathematics is presented like, ‘Here’s the rule, learn it,’ and you never really realize there are people who worked a long time and struggled to come up with these things,” says Dr. Kim Jongerius. Students enrolled in Topics in the History of Mathematics get much more than just a brief biography of the great mathematical minds from centuries past. Jongerius delves into the historical context of their surroundings and the factors that may have influenced their work. More often than not, mathematicians were influenced by theology. “Prof. Jongerius taught us that many mathematicians throughout history were doing math to try to learn more about the world and the Bible. They wanted to further God’s kingdom,” explains senior Mark Haashoff. Students also experience firsthand the difficulties of communicating complex mathematical discoveries in an age of painstaking communication. Jongerius assigns collaborative projects in which two students must work together to solve a problem, but can only communicate through handwritten letters and documents. “The really bright mathematical minds didn’t tend to congregate in the same place,” Jongerius explains. Letters were written back and forth, and the few published books were often circulated very slowly. By the time it came to the purpose of this course, Jongerius wants it to resonate as more than just a history lesson. “I hope students learn that math isn’t a set of rules that someone came up with once… that it developed and it continues to develop.”

Bravo!
A Northwestern student and alumna received Certificates of Merit for technical design and theatre management at the Region V Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, held at Iowa State University Jan. 16-20.

Kory Jensen ’11 received a certificate for his lighting design for Baghdad Tales, adapted from Arabian Nights and performed last spring. Jensen, an education major, is a junior in Aurora, Colo.

Sophomore Laura Jenkins, Brandon, Wis., led the front-of-house team for A Midsummer Night’s Dream that also received recognition. The front-of-house team included the box office staff, house manager, ushers and dramaturgy students who created educational displays about the historical context of the play, which was presented to audiences of schoolchildren throughout October.

Watt Success

Since Northwestern and Dordt have a heated rivalry, it was probably appropriate that their December basketball game on campus was the site of a presentation related to heating and cooling efficiency. During halftime, Orange City Municipal Utilities represented presented a $12,018 rebate check to Northwestern in recognition of the college’s installation of the latest energy-efficient equipment in North Suites Hall last summer.

The energy conservation efforts in the new men’s dorm and upgraded lighting in other campus buildings, NWC saved almost 457,000 kilowatt-hours of energy last year—enough energy to power approximately 42 homes for one year.

Learning’s a Trip

One new program is among the three summer study abroad opportunities available to Northwestern students in 2012.

After a salutatory in Vienna, music professor Dr. Jurreen Kang will be joined by fellow music professor Dr. Luke Dahm in leading a trip to Austria that focuses on that country’s musical history and culture. Students will stay with host families and attend concerts and visit museums in Vienna, Salzburg and Prague.

Spanish professor Rick Clark is once again taking students to Ecuador, the country he grew up in as the son of missionaries. Students will learn about Ecuadorian society and culture, study Spanish, live with host families for three weeks in Quito, and worship with Christian members of the Huarani tribe in the Amazon jungle.

Finally, a summer study abroad program in Great Britain will examine British cultural through art and architecture. Led by theatre professors Bob Hubbell and Jeff Taylor, students will attend theatre productions, visit museums, and explore England’s many cathedrals, markets, pubs and squares.
Learning by Story

In a classroom filled with NWC peers and professors, Ignacio Retagui-Higuera, Storm Lake, Iowa, shared how, as an eight-year-old, he hid in a field with his mother, brother and sister. When it got dark, his mother told them to run, so they did—across the border from Mexico into the U.S., where Ignacio’s farm worker father was waiting, having received amnesty during the Reagan administration.

The sophomore, now a citizen, was one of many who shared his story during Northwestern’s fifth annual Day of Learning in Community (DLC) Feb. 15. Themed “Different Together,” the event featured more than 40 presentations offered by students, faculty, staff and alumni, aimed to enable members of the campus community to teach each other through stories of ignoring and exploring difference.

Among the more than 70 students who became DLC teachers through stories of ignoring and exploring difference, was Shweta Baniya, a freshman. She can’t stop turning off lights, where she and her family can expect electricity about eight hours a day, and politics, Ebonics (African American Vernacular English) and types and prejudice that spilled into the hallway.

Taking a break from regular classes and activities, members of the Northwestern community met disability advocate Heather (Harrison ’88) Northrop and her assistance dog, Zephyr. They heard stories about adoption, bullying and interracial dating. They discussed affirmative action and politics, Ebonics (African American Vernacular English) and why students are told to “write white” on college essays and test papers.

They sought to educate each other about avoiding what Nigerian author Chimamanda Adichie, speaking in the day’s opening film, calls “the danger of a single story.”

Learning by Story
Door Man

Freshman Paul McCleary heads to Northwestern's cafeteria a half hour before he'd like to have a meal. He holds open the door, greets those who pass, eats and then opens the door again as diners file out.

Every day, nearly every meal, McCleary is there. And he's also often at the doors of Christ Chapel and the Rowenhorst Student Center, continuing a habit he started in his Ankeny, Iowa, high school. To him, the hundreds of hellos said daily are his doorway to authentic Christianity.

"If we want to be like Jesus, we need to be humble and not think so highly of ourselves," McCleary says. "What really shows you care is being willing to do little things."

Reactions to McCleary's quiet servanthood include surprise, appreciation and—more often than not—the question, "How long do you stand here?"

When a certain six-foot student approaches, McCleary steps aside and lets him open his own door. It's a joke between the two, who might not otherwise have shared a laugh had McCleary not taken his post.

Door opening has, quite literally, opened the door to relationships on campus for this soft-spoken student. People are more willing to talk, he finds, especially to someone who's not in any hurry. Impatience had been an early hurdle, but now he sees his time manning doors as meditative.

"It's kind of nice to not worry about anything for awhile and just talk to people as they pass," McCleary says. "I let them know I hope their day goes alright."

As McCleary pursues a sociology major with a criminal justice concentration, he believes his profession will line up with this same desire to meet people where they are.

"When I was a kid, I thought it would be cool to be a police officer and have adventures," McCleary says. "Now that I'm here at college, I've been hearing about social change, how we need to do those things as Christians. Being a police officer seems like a way to get out there and be with people and figure out ways to address these issues."

For now, opening doors is McCleary's way of working toward the public good. He's a believer in small kindnesses done regularly.

"It's good to find something you can consistently do that helps people," McCleary says. "It doesn't have to be very big—I'm just doing this—but be consistent, every day, every week. Just get it into your routine. What I do is not really a random act of kindness. It's more of a routine act of kindness."

by Amy Scheer

Award-Winning Marketing

Two more certificates adorn the walls in Northwestern's public relations offices after the college won awards in the 2011 Council for Advancement and Support of Education District Six competition in January.

A series of new recruiting publications won a silver award. The publications included a viewbook, search piece and college fair piece developed by NWC in partnership with Stamats Communications of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, last summer. The series also included postcards, posters, and brochures for academics, athletics, campus life, faith, financial aid, the fine arts and graduate success, produced by the public relations office with assistance from freelance designers.

Northwestern's mobile site, m.nwciowa.edu, received a bronze award. Launched last summer under the leadership of Web Development Manager Dan Robinson '01, the site enables constituents to access the latest Northwestern news and sports scores, event calendars, a campus directory, facility hours, directions to campus and much more via smartphones.

Recommended

A sort of honor roll for academic departments, the 2012 edition of Rugg’s Recommendations on the Colleges lists 18 Northwestern programs as being among the nation’s best. Most schools in the guidebook have around nine departments cited. The annual publication recommends Northwestern’s actuarial science, athletic training, biology, business, chemistry, computer science, ecological science, education, English, history, music, philosophy, physics, psychology, religion, social work, Spanish and theatre programs.

Written by Frederick Rugg, a Brown University graduate who directed secondary college counseling programs for 25 years and conducted college seminars around the country for 23 years, the book includes programs at 1,125 four-year colleges he has identified as providing a high-quality education.
**Three-peat!**

Women’s basketball team claims third straight national title

When Northwestern’s women’s basketball team started off this season with a 4-4 record, at least one person questioned what new head coach Chris Yaw ’92 was doing. Yaw himself: “I was wondering if the right guy was running the ship,” says Yaw. “Am we guiding the ship in the right direction? Are we even in the right ocean?”

“I was wondering if the right guy was running the ship,” says Yaw. “Am we guiding the ship in the right direction? Are we even in the right ocean?”

Hall of Fame coach Earl Woudstra was doing. During a team Bible study the night before their semifinal-round game, the players took time to say what they appreciated about each other. “That was one of the coolest things I’ve ever been part of,” says Kuhlmann. “I felt like there was no pressure anymore after that. I didn’t feel like we had to win, I just wanted to go out and play with my teammates. I didn’t want this to be over.”

By the time Kuhlmann’s college career had ended, she had earned her third consecutive national championship. And there was no question the Raider ship was sailing smoothly.

**Champs!**

- Kami Kuhlmann was named MVP of the national tournament. Kendra De Jong, who had a double-double in every national tournament game, also made the all-tourney team.
- De Jong, the GPC player of the year, was named first-team All-GPC for the second year in a row and Kuhlmann earned second-team honors.
- Chris Yaw was named the national coach of the year.

**Mark’s Basketball**

**GPAC Champs**

The Raiders beat Dordt by 25 points in Sioux Center to capture the GPAC tournament championship for the first time since 2008 and give Coach Kris Korver his 300th career win. Northwestern advanced to the second round of the national tournament before losing with a 26-7 record and a ninth place national ranking. Ben Miller earned All-America third team status and Daniel Van Kalkberk was named to the Capital One Academic All-America College Division second team.

**Wrestling**

**Three-Time All-American**

Nic Leither became an All-American for the third year after placing fifth at the national meet in 197 pounds. He was among a school-record 10 national qualifiers. Josiah Simburger, at 141, received national wrestler of the week recognition in January after winning the York Open and defeating a University of Nebraska wrestler. Simburger and Zach Fishman, at 149, earned first-team All-GPC honors.

**Indoor Track Soaring**

Matt Huseman won the high jump at nationals, setting a school record of 6-11.75 effort. He becomes only the third Raider in school history to win an individual title, joining Fernando Abogattas ’68 and Jacob Kuzmaan ’01. Joining him as All-Americans were the seventh-place 4x800 relay team of Teresa Kerkellet, Brianna Hobbs, Sara Edwardsen and Dawn Gildersleeve; Keystina Bouchard, who placed eighth in the 500-meter run, Gildersleeve, who was sixth in the 1000-meter run; and Logan Howland, seventh in the 1000. Husman also won the high jump at the GPAC meet. The men placed sixth and the women were seventh.

**Scholar-Athletes Standouts**

Thirty Raiders in fall and winter sports earned NAIA Scholar-Athlete recognition, including nine in football and eight in cross country. Repeat honorees included Matt Dowell (wrestling), Teresa Kerkellet, Kylie Underwood, Adam Verhoef and Allison Wieladey (cross country), Val Kleinjan, Kami Kuhlmann and Walker Seim (basketball), and Jeremy Sheppand (football).

For more on Raider sports, visit www.nwcraiders.com

**Grandpa Stock drives for Iowa in Northwestern’s 16-11 victory over Morningside in soccer.**
In a Prof’s Office

Behind the Bibleman action figure in the window is history professor Mike Kugler’s office, where texts on the Scottish enlightenment rest next to a Bart Simpson blow-up doll. Across campus, English professor Ann Lundberg’s beloved books keep company with artifacts from summers as a park ranger. What does a prof love besides learning? Step into her office. Look around.

Photos by Doug Burg and Geoff Johnson
When Rob Bell’s book *Love Wins* created a storm of controversy following its publication last year, both *USA Today* and *Time* magazine called Dr. Richard Mouw ’59 for comment. Mouw, a leading evangelical voice in the United States, serves as president of Fuller Theological Seminary. Bell, at the time the pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., is a Fuller graduate.

In fact, Bell may be Fuller’s most well-known alumnus. The 41-year-old was an evangelical celebrity by the age of 30, having founded Mars Hill in 1999 when he was just 28. The church grew quickly and today draws 7,000 people to its Sunday services. Bell also created the popular video series on Christianity called Nooma (a variation of the Greek word for spirit) and authored books with the unusual titles of *Velvet Elvis* and *Sex God*. In 2011 *Time* included Bell on its list of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Mouw describes Bell as a solid evangelical with a provocative style. “I’ve always admired the way Rob reaches out to the younger generation and people who are alienated from traditional churches,” he says. “I’ve met many people in Grand Rapids who either came to faith in Christ or who found a new vitality in their faith through Rob’s ministry.”

Some of those people, however, (Mouw says as many as 1,000) have left Mars Hill due to the theology of *Love Wins*. The book is widely criticized for Bell’s suggestion that the redemptive work of Jesus may be universal—that every person who ever lived will eventually succumb to God’s irresistible grace and enter heaven.

“I think the voice in the book is, again, more provocative,” Mouw says. “It’s speaking to a broader culture.”
The culture Bell is addressing is the one in which today’s college students are asking questions about faith and the church. They’re reading books like Bell’s and also learning about Reformed doctrines like presbyterianism. They’re in wonder what the churches they grew up in have to offer and how to follow Jesus. They live in a world referred to as post-Christian that is shifting from modernism to postmodernism.

For centuries, the church held a central and privileged role in Western society—even since the conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine in 313 A.D. With the rise of pluralism, however, it has lost its favored status and more and more finds itself on the margins of society. Part of that shift was due to modernism, a worldview arising in the 17th century that argued truth could be discovered not through revelation, but through reason. Life was divided into sacred and secular, and the scientific method was viewed as the way to understand both ourselves and the world.

Skepticism, says today’s students may not know what it is, but they resonate with his description of some of its characteristics: suspicion of any form of authority and power, increasing fragmentation, relativism and ambiguity, and a deep yearning for community and connection.

The Birth of the Emerging Church

At the time Bell was founding Mars Hill, other young evangelicals were beginning to wrestle with how to relate the gospel to a postmodern society. Initially focused on alternative worship services for Generation X, they were dissatisfied with the traditional church and eager to pioneer new models of ministry. Soon they were writing and speaking about what they saw as evangelicalism’s faults.

By 2001, the words emerging and emergent were being used as the names for what many saw as a protest movement. One of the earliest voices in that movement was that of Brian McLaren, a pastor who wrote about a postmodern form of Christianity in his book A New Kind of Christianity. McLaren eventually became the leader of a network of emerging church leaders that took the name Emergent Village and communicated through a website and blog.

For many people, McLaren—who has become more and more liberal in his theology—represents the emerging church. But Jim Belcher, a Fuller grad who considers Richard Mouw a mentor and who used to pastor in Sioux Falls, S.D., fits the definition of a relevant, although he eschews labels: A native Californian, he was doing road construction when he became a Christian in 1992.

When his denomination asked him to start an outreach church to Generation X, Sundstrom was working as a youth pastor and reading about postmodernism’s influence on the church. Data from the 2000 census had revealed there were 33,000 people in Sioux Falls between the ages of 18 and 36, but only 1,800 of them were attending a church. The Crossing held its first worship service on Pentecost Sunday in 2002.

“The original intent was to reach that age group,” Sundstrom says, “but as time went on, there were a number of us around the country who were doing church a little differently—not theologically different, but stylistically. We were attempting new things to be more relevant to the current culture. There was no plan or leader. It’s just that a number of churches started to emerge across the country that had a similar hunger for relevance and passion in the life of the church.”

Evangelicals who want to make the gospel understandable to postmodern culture by updating preaching techniques, worship styles and church leadership structures. “Reconstructionists” is his term for those who hold a more orthodox view of Scripture but want to change the church’s current form and structure. Finally, “revisionists” are those who question and revise both the gospel and the church, looking to leaders from the Emergent Village like McLaren, Tony Jones and Doug Pagitt.

Rev. Seth Sundstrom, a 42-year-old Reformed Church in America pastor in Sioux Falls, S.D., fits the definition of a relevant, although he eschews labels: A native Californian, he was doing road construction when he became a Christian in 1992.

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“The original intent was to reach that age group,” Sundstrom says, “but as time went on, there were a number of us around the country who were doing church a little differently—not theologically different, but stylistically. We were attempting new things to be more relevant to the current culture. There was no plan or leader. It’s just that a number of churches started to emerge across the country that had a similar hunger for relevance and passion in the life of the church.”

Reaching Today’s Generation

The specter of young people abandoning church is a fear of many Christians. However, Dr. Scott Mommsen, who teaches sociology at Northwestern, says that looking at just one slice of a person’s life provides an incomplete picture.

“It’s important to remember that people are not just young people. They’re people. If we look at youth as they’re leaving home and before they’re married and have kids, it’s very common for them to be less attached to a church,” he says. “Research shows people come back to church when they start having a family.”

Dr. Bradley Wright, a sociologist who teaches at the University of Connecticut, studies national surveys about the religious practices of Americans. He says research also shows that today’s single young people are much less likely to attend church than single people of the previous generation. “This problem is compounded by the trend that fewer people are getting married, and they are often older when they do,” he writes.

“As a result, a key challenge for today’s church is reaching young single people.”

Another change in demographics is the increase in people who are religiously unaffiliated. Those who indicate no religion in national surveys has risen from 8 percent in 1990 to 15 percent in 2008. Rare before the 1970s, the unaffiliated have grown in every decade and in every age category. During that same time period, evangelicals reached approximately 25 percent of the population—a level they’ve maintained since the 1990s—while mainline Protestants dropped from over 30 percent to less than 15 percent.

Also notable is another characteristic of the religiously unaffiliated. “Earlier in the 20th century, it was common for people raised without a religious affiliation to convert to a religion in adulthood, typically upon A Changing World

The culture Bell is addressing is the one in which today’s college students are asking questions about faith and the church. They’re reading books like Bell’s and also learning about Reformed doctrines like presbyterianism. They’re in wonder what the churches they grew up in have to offer and how to follow Jesus. They live in a world referred to as post-Christian that is shifting from modernism to postmodernism.
Hallmarks of a Protest Movement

Joel Hubers is a 2003 graduate of Northwestern who grew up in the church and wed his college sweetheart, Lacey (Heemstra ’02), when he began attending The Crossing, the RCA’s church plant in Sioux Falls.

Joe and Lacey Hubers found that kind of “whole life” spirituality was at. They want a church that cares about the broad, redemptive purposes of God, that wants to heal and restore the broken, fight injustice and oppression, and care for the world God has made.”

A second core practice of emerging churches—transforming secular space—is a response to modernism’s division of the sacred from the secular. Instead of that false dichotomy, there’s a recognition that all of life is sacred and due to God as worship. Joe and Lacey Hubers found that kind of “whole life” spirituality when they began attending The Crossing, the RCA’s church plant in Sioux Falls.

“What was different about The Crossing is that their intention at all times was to take it beyond just this ‘club’ mentality,” Joe says. A focus on discipleship and relationships helped the Hubers mature in their faith. Being a Christian became more than just a cultural practice relegated to Sundays.

Coffee, Candles and Couches

As important as community is to the emerging church, so is the question of who may belong. Gibbs and Bolger refer to this hallmark of the emerging church as “welcoming the stranger,” something that’s in keeping with its focus on changed lives rather than changed beliefs.

“We are all part of a larger story,” says Gibbons. “What makes us special is who we are and how we express it.”

“We use songs that are current along with songs that are ancient, and we mix them together and worship in a way that is relevant to who we are as human beings, desiring to express our love for God.”

While The Crossing isn’t large—it has a core of just 200 people and 250 to 270 attending on any given Sunday—community is encouraged through the church’s 22 Life Groups. And within those Life Groups are Kyvos Groups: people meeting one-on-one or in smaller gatherings of three or four for accountability and discipleship.

“What I think The Crossing has done very well is saying, no, this isn’t a club. This is church. This is doing life together. This is walking with Christ,” says Hubers. “The Crossing doesn’t have one front door; it has two or four for accountability and discipleship.

“Pastor” Seth and I talked about this idea of compartmentalization,” Joe explains. “For a lot of people, they have their church box and their work box and their family box. We want to mix all the boxes up and spill them out on the floor and have no separation or boundary between work, family and faith. It’s all influencing each other.”

The third core practice of emerging churches is living in community. There’s a focus on relationships instead of meetings and an understanding that the church is people rather than a building. In place of modernism’s emphasis of individualism, there’s postmodernism’s hunger for connection.

“Church is a seven-day-a-week identification,” write Gibbons and Bolger, “not a once-a-week, 90-minute respite from the real world.” Measuring success by connectedness instead of growth, they say, calls into question many of the activities of the traditional church. It also means reproducing by establishing a new church when size interferes with the relational health of the congregation.

“We have to remember that more and more individuals in our emerging culture have not grown up in a church,” says Dan Kimball, a generation with the gospel and are at the core of efforts to transform the church. “We have to remember that more and more individuals in our emerging culture have not grown up in a church,” says Dan Kimball, a generation with the gospel and are at the core of efforts to transform the church.

Deep Church

In his book Deep Church, Belcher calls that separation a “narrow view of the church—between their church and the world.” It’s hearing the Lord’s teaching about the Kingdom of God as a reminder that—to quote Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper—“God is in the reclamation business and is calling us to be part of it.

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Knowing Truth

While traditional and emerging churches may not see eye to eye on matters of worship style or the best way to witness, the biggest source of conflict between the two camps stems from whether they see postmodernism in a positive or negative light.

Kissinger says the root of the traditional church’s objection to postmodernism lies in one’s understanding of truth. “For a modern mindset, we know absolutes and we absolutely know them. And God is absolute truth,” explains Monsma. “It’s not that truth is relative. It’s that human understanding is always limited and relative,” he continues.

Kevin DeYoung is a Hope College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary graduate who served as associate pastor of First Reformed Church in Orange City for two years. Since 2004 he has been the senior pastor of University Reformed Church in East Lansing, Mich., just an hour away from Mars Hill, Bell’s former church. He is also the author of Why We’re Not Emergent, a book he wrote with Ted Kluck that won a book award in 2009. Belcher praises it for presenting “the most in-depth analysis of emergent theology to date.”

DeYoung says there are strengths and weaknesses in both modernism and postmodernism—aspects of both that either fit or conflict with the Christian faith. “Modernism believes in truth and absolutes but has a harder time believing in miracles or the mysterious,” he writes, “whereas, postmodernism accepts spirituality and the unexplainable but doesn’t have a firm concept of truth.”

“The fact that there are different interpretations of Scripture shouldn’t surprise us, DeYoung says. People hold differing viewpoints in any field of human inquiry, including science. “If we can’t know anything about the Bible because people disagree,” he reasons, “then we can’t know anything about truth, because people disagree about every single thing under the sun.”

So disagreements have admittedly contributed to the thousands of denominations in the world today, but DeYoung points out that in mainstream evangelicalism, there are more similarities than differences, “and certainly similarity and agreement on the core essentials of the faith.”

Agreement on those core essentials is possible, he says, “because God has spoken to us clearly and intelligibly and has given us ears to hear his voice. Christianity is based upon, and the whole Bible assumes, a certain knowledge of and adherence to definitive assertions about God and his Christ.”

Belcher also believes the Scriptures are clear on what he calls “the first-tier doctrines of the Great Tradition” as outlined in the Apostles’ Creed. It’s those first-tier doctrines that can help determine if someone remains orthodox, he says, while second-tier doctrines—those that are distinctive from one denomination to another—should be held with humility rather than used to divide.

From Emerging to Missional

Emerging church author and pastor Dan Kimball maintains that those essential core doctrines can be held with “bold confidence.”

“Apostles’ Creed. It’s those first-tier doctrines that can help determine if someone remains orthodox, he says, while second-tier doctrines—those that are distinctive from one denomination to another—should be held with humility rather than used to divide.

Emerging generations are looking for truth, and when we have something we know is true, we should clearly and boldly say it.”

“We just need to preach Jesus,” Sundstrom says. “When it comes down to it, we have the gospel, and that’s what’s most important. When you look at places like China or India and how the gospel is exploding there, it’s not exploding because they have slick PowerPoint presentations or Rob Bell videos. It’s because they have the Word.”
Power Broker

Iowa’s Bob Vander Plaats influences presidential race

By Duane Berlin

As national media converged upon Iowa in the months leading up to the first-in-the-nation presidential caucuses, Bob Vander Plaats ’85 was called “Iowa’s social conservative king” by Time magazine, the state’s “go-to guy” by the Wall Street Journal, and one of the country’s 10 most coveted endorsements by The Hill.

By the time the candidates and media had moved on to South Carolina and Florida, the labels seemed to have been accurate. Vander Plaats announced his endorsement of Rick Santorum two weeks prior to the Iowa caucuses, at a time when the former Pennsylvania senator was polling about 1 percent. Santorum was eventually declared Iowa winner with 24.6 percent of the vote.

“[Vander Plaats] ignited a new interest in politics. ‘I saw us funding bureaucracy, that role, Vander Plaats was appointed to the state’s Advisory Council on Brain Injuries. While in Unlimited, a Sioux City agency that provides rehabilitative services for individuals with disabilities such as brain or spinal cord injuries. While in

In other words, we would have never looked beyond where we were.”

Today Vander Plaats calls him a “dynamic blessing. If it hadn’t been for the miracle of Lucas, we would have never looked beyond where we were.”

Vander Plaats embarked upon a career in education. In 1993, while he was principal of Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn High School, the Iowa Civil Liberties Union filed suit against MMC and another school district to try to prevent student-initiated commencement prayers. Vander Plaats recalls being grilled for an hour on the stand in federal district court, with the judge focusing on his background as a graduate of Christian schools. “He thought my purpose was to proselytize,” he says. The try to do what’s right.”

Vander Plaats understands that verbal barrages and accusations are part of the game for those willing to take controversial stands in the public square. He responds by taking comfort in Scripture, counseling his family not to read the blogs, and recalling a phrase he’s often repeated: “You’ll never be wrong when you do what’s right.”

Like a star three-point shooter who’s constantly double-teamed, Vander Plaats understands that verbal barrages and accusations are part of the game for those willing to take controversial stands in the public square. He responds by taking comfort in Scripture, counseling his family not to read the blogs, and recalling a phrase he’s often repeated: “You’ll never be wrong when you do what’s right.”

And he enjoys remembering a speaking engagement he had on a college campus. A liberal student spoke up at an open mic time, disagreeing with his viewpoint on same-sex marriage. Vander Plaats says he walked her through why everyone needs to be concerned about the dangers of judicial activism. “I talked about the process the judges used to make their decision—that they would eventually reach conclusions through that process that she couldn’t agree with. By the end of our time together, she told a reporter, ‘He’s way different than I thought. I could vote for him.’”

Vander Plaats says the pillars of his organization’s pro-family views are the sanctity of human life, God’s design for one-man/one-woman marriage, preservation of the Constitution, and economic freedom. Vander Plaats has shared his stance on marriage, preservation of the Constitution, and economic freedom.

He ran unsuccessfully for the Republican gubernatorial nomination in 2002. He also ran in 2006, until he withdrew to become Jim Nussle’s running mate in another losing effort. In 2010, he ran again and garnered 41 percent of the vote, losing to Terry Branstad.

Normally, Vander Plaats admits, losing candidates lose influence. But he gained some clout when he chaired Mike Huckabee’s surprising win in the 2008 Iowa caucuses. And he parlayed his conservative credentials into a successful 2010 campaign to oust three members of the Iowa Supreme Court who had voted to overturn Iowa’s Defense of Marriage Act, resulting in the legalization of same-sex marriages.

After the vote, Vander Plaats became president of the Family Leader, an umbrella organization that includes groups such as the Iowa Family Policy Center and a political action committee. The Family Leader organized a lecture series that brought most of the Republican presidential candidates to voters across the state and a forum in which the candidates talked about family values in front of an audience of 2,500.

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In a congratulatory phone call, Donald Trump gave Vander Plaats some friendly chastising when the Iowaan deflected praise for Santorum’s victory. “Have you ever watched my show?” asked the star of The Apprentice. “You should take the credit.”

Vander Plaats’ rise to political power broker wasn’t foreseen by those who knew the lanky Sheldon, Iowa, native decades ago. B.J. Mulder ’85, one of his Red Raider basketball teammates, saw in Vander Plaats strong leadership qualities, a good dose of confidence and an unparalleled work ethic, but he didn’t envision him as a politician. “He was always very passionate. You knew whatever he decided to do, he was going to give it 110 percent.”

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The Wedding Gift

by Amy Schier

B etty Van Der Weide sat on a bed in Tennessee’s Heartbreak Hotel and told her husband, Rod, “You’re not going to believe this.”

The two were on a rare road trip away from Maurice, Iowa, when their former host student Natsuki (Isobe ’99) Nagakawa called from Japan with news of her wedding. After inviting the couple to attend, she added, “All expenses are on us.”

“I appreciate Rod and Betty for everything they did for me,” Nagakawa wrote in an email. “To visit their home and spend time with them made me feel so safe and secure. I wanted their presence at our wedding and to give them a trip to Japan. It was my selfish wish.”

The Van Der Weides debated for three weeks before accepting such a generous gift, the scope of which would unfold with the beauty of a marriage and to give them a trip to Japan. It was my selfish wish.”

It was the trip of a lifetime for the Van Der Weides, who traveled little yet welcomed the world into their home. For Nagakawa, the journey fulfilled a dream held since graduation: For 10 years, she’d been putting away money to fly the couple to Japan.

“My wish of seeing them once again came true,” she wrote. “My guests could know me better through their presence since they were a big part of my life. I cannot give them back as much as I got from them.”

’68 Kellie Klinker Simonson directed and starred in a production of Steel Magnolias for the Spencer (Iowa) Community Theatre in December. She taught fundamentals of Oral Communication for Iowa Lakes Community College and also teaches a class on Western movies for LC3’s Third Age College.

’73 Ronald Romper is associate director of Libraries at Roosevelt University in Chicago. He is married to the Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame for his outstanding service to the community. Guthmiller was recognized by his peers: Terry Branstam at ceremonies in Denver; Joanne Soliday from Performa visited campus in January; she said Northwestern’s survey response numbers were “off the charts,” and, she added, “I’ve been working in higher education for more than 15 years, and Northwestern’s percentages on some of our survey questions were as high as I’ve ever experienced.”

Of the alumni who responded, 94 percent said Northwestern provides them opportunities to stay connected, and 75 percent said they’d visited the college with the last five years. Eighty in 10 said the college had a lasting impact on their spiritual lives, and nearly half are still in contact with a faculty mentor. Most graduating, 96 percent of alumni said they would recommend Northwestern.

Responses like these affirm administrators and our Strategic Planning Committee as they set short- and long-term priorities and plan Northwestern’s future.

The strategic plan and campus master plan will be shared with you in the coming months as both are finalized. I believe we’re on the verge of some exciting changes that will make Northwestern even better.

Thanks to those of you who took the time to complete Performa survey last fall. Thanks also to those who have already supported the Imagine Campaign, which is setting the stage for new strategic goals. If you want to get involved, please contact me.

Northwestern Classic

Notes

Red Ties

MAKE BLOCKEREAU ’81 Director of alumni relations

We all like to hear good things about ourselves. Recently the Northwestern College community had a chance to hear some great things about the college we love. The best part was that everybody involved in the overall feedback, positive feedback came from those we know best, including our alumni.

Northwestern has engaged Percepta Higher Education to help focus the college’s strategic plan and update the campus master plan. As part of their research, they surveyed employees, alumni, students and their parents.

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CLoASS NOtES

RED Raider
Golf Classic

Friday, June 8
Landmark Golf Club
Orange City

Support the athletic department by playing in this annual four-person scramble. Morning and afternoon tee times will be available. Contact some friends and join us for a great RED Raider gathering!

REGISTER
www.nwcraiders.com/redraiderclassic
Or contact Kyle Archterhoff, 712-707-7282
or archterhk@nwcio.edu

30 SPRING 2012

CLASS NOTES
As the teaching. “I don’t make decisions that affect national security in industrial/organizational psychology and will become an instructor. Lead drives Huibregtse, now a major. He completed a master’s degree certain the time.’ It wasn’t a feeling of grand patriotism. I just knew pilot hopes. Now he knew his second chance could look very different. he had been rejected, high school hockey injuries dashing fighter—that he got details—and a phone call. of shock and sadness. It was a day of decision. Biding his time in a—by beth (nikke l ’02) gauleke

Aim High

For Matt Huibregtse ’01, Sept. 11, 2001, was more than a day of shock and sadness. It was a day of decision. Biding his time in a hometown factory since his Air Force commitment a month prior, he heard vague reports of planes and towers. It wasn’t until arriving home that he got details—and a phone call. He was his recruiter. “Training starts next month. Still want to go?” The Air Force was Huibregtse’s lifelong dream. Four years earlier he had been rejected, high school hockey injuries dashing fighter-pilot hopes. Now he knew his second chance could look very different. Still, he says, the decision wasn’t difficult. “I remember thinking, ‘If the world needs Christian leaders, now is ten years and two deployments to Iraq later, that same desire to

Anna Hansen, Minneapolis, is a site leader for Athletes Committed to the Educa-

tion of Students. Jauna (Bloemenendaal) Harderwsen is a registered nurse at the Orange City Area Health System. Greta Strong is serving in a media relations fellowship at the Arena Stage in the Mead Center for American Theater in Washington, D.C. Phillip Hagman is a business analyst for Wells Fargo Home Mortgage in West Des Moines, Iowa. Heidi Hildesbrandt is a teacher for Southwestern Star Concept Schools in Warner, Minn. Mike (Johnston) Hjelmeland is a graphic designer and reporter for The hometown Press in Sauk, Iowa. Jessica Shumick is a recreational advisor and certified medicare site of Village Northwest Unlimited in Sheldon, Iowa. Beth Hunter is a registered nurse at Sanford Laurene (Billie) Medical Center. Kory Jensen is a teacher for the Aurora (Iowa) Public Schools. Becca (Shirley) Kramer is an admis-
sions counselor at Northwestern. Grant Landon is a student at NDSU University School of Medicine in the West Tid. Andrews (Wendy) Lautius is a registered nurse in the critical care unit at Trinity Re-
gional Medical Center in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Amanda Leonard is a teacher for the Manasses (Mires) Public Schools. Shane Leek is pursuing a master’s degree in public health and museum studies at the University of South Carolina. Hillary (Askins) Medalen is a publishing specialist at Spader Business Management in Sioux Falls. Charity Miller, Valentine, Neb., is a regis-
tered nurse at Cherry County Hospital. Custody Muirberg is a registered nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit at San-
ford Health in Sioux Falls. Carissa Muilenburg is a senior ac-
countant at Citi Bank and Company in Sheldon, Iowa. Caitlin Neren, Sioux Falls, is a regis-
tered nurse at Avera McKennan Hospital. Angela Ness teaches kindergarten in Roosevelt, Minn. Blake Moret is assistant manager of Noodles and Company in Coralville, Iowa. Logan Ogden is pursuing a master’s degree in aviation science: sport nutrition and human performance at South Dakota State University. Jacob Peterson is a medical student at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha. Jacklyn Pumph teaches middle school Bible at Sioux Falls Christian School. Cody Paul is studying the Master of Divinity degree program at Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Mich. His wife, Kait (Koerselman), is a designer at Graphics Spex and Embroidery. Rachel Raper serves as office manager for Atlas in Orange City. Emily (Mullinex) Rasmussen is marketing coordinator for Irene’s, a wine company in Sonoma, Calif. Mallory Richardson teaches kindergarten at Spirit Lake (Iowa) Elementary School. Alli (Kleenbroek) Sanchez-Perry is a youth discipleship intern at The Reformed Church in Plano, Texas. Her husband, John, is the assistant to the Center for the Study ofLatino Christianity and Religion at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, where he is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree. Amanda Schroeder is a registered nurse at The Lutheran Home in Omaha. Sarah Sieger, Sioux Falls, is a registered nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit at Sanford USD Medical Center. Jannise (de Ward) Silas is an admis-
sions counselor at Northwestern.

Shane (Leder) Skold is a clinical research technician for Exemplar Genetics in Sioux Center. Chelsea Stanton is serving with Mission Nine in Atlanta. Emily (Bolkema) Vande Griend is a registered nurse at the Orange City Area Medical Center in Orange City.

Kasey Summerer is pursuing a master’s degree in theology at Dallas Theological Seminary. Neesa Summer is teaching elementary special education in Cedar, Iowa. Michael Ten Clay, Orange City, is an accountant at Van Bruggen & Vande Vegte. Kristin (Neth) Tiggins is a chipmunk assistant at Inspire Chiropractic in Sioux Falls. Sarah (Blitzen) Vande Griend is a general ledger accountant at Aki Products in Rock Valley, Iowa. Matt Vander Moen is serving with the Peace Corps in Panama for two years, doing community environmental conservation. Bryne Vender Stolt serves as the direc-
tor of youth ministries at Faith Christian Reformed Church in Sheldon, IA. Delaparte (Stenlees) Woudstra teaches fourth grade at El Camino Academy in Bogota, Colombia.

New Arrivals

Gary and Jordi (Marshall ’85) Fabiash, daughter by adoption, Ennen (28), and see by adoption, Ennen (24), Enn (19) and Josh (17). Laura and Jordan Walton ’82, daughter, Hazel Rae Rebecca and Steven Bogaard ’95, daugh-
ter, Zemirah Grace

Every time Stephanie Hague ’07 sees that ad—and dozens others—she feels a twinge of professional pride. Since 2008, Hague has worked as an associate account for JWT Manhattan, one of the world’s largest advertising firms. “It’s surreal sometimes,” says the native of West Des Moines, Iowa, who moved to The Big Apple with only a vague idea of what she’d like to do. “I always wanted to live in a bigger city. So without even having a job offer, I gathered all my stuff and headed to New York.” Hague’s leap of faith paid off. Not only does the business

While she’s a long way from Iowa, Hague’s managed to make a life for herself that isn’t all that different from what she had before. “New York is a very weird and wonderful place,” she says. “I’m fortunate I’ve found very loving, caring and giving friends. The more time I’m here, the more I’ve grown roots here.”

by Sarah Asp Olson ’03

Stephanie in the City

Have you seen the commercial for Macy’s where the shoe salesman walks into the back room and encounters a workplace filled with celebrities like Martha Stewart, Jessica Simpson and Sean “Diddy” Combs?

While she’s a long way from Iowa, Hague’s managed to make a life for herself that isn’t all that different from what she had before. “New York is a very weird and wonderful place,” she says. ‘I’m fortunate I’ve found very loving, caring and giving friends. The more time I’m here, the more I’ve grown roots here.”
Nicole (Mohrlink ’02) and Karl Velez ’02, daughter, Ameda Faith, joins Grace (9) and Jami (5) at Boyden-Hull (Iowa) High School and enrolled in the English teacher included several years at Hope College and a master’s degree at Hope College and a master’s degree in 1964. She later received a doctorate in philosophy from Stanford University. Among her survivors are six children.

Phyllis Stouwemeyer ’55, age 80, died Sept. 1 in Omaha. She graduated from University of Nebraska Dental College and was a dentist in San Francisco for many years. She later received a doctorate in philosophy from Stanford University. Among her survivors are six children.

Mariana VanderVlied, administrative assistant to the academic dean from 1951 to 2001, age 72, died Oct. 8 in Orange City. She owned a bachelor’s degree from Sterling College in Kansas. She and her husband, the Rev. Stan, served Reforma

Christmas Mail

Remember those lean college years when you searched the sofa for quarters to do laundry and lived on peanut butter and ramen noodles? How excited would you have been to receive $100 randomly in the mail one day?

Kari Heidebrink, a Northwestern junior, was one of two students who received exactly such a gift this Christmas. She was so surprised, at first she thought the gift was a joke. But it was real money, so she spent some on her mother’s Christmas present and put the rest toward gifts for friends. And, beyond just being grateful, Heidebrink says she’s inspired to give generously when she has a steady income someday.

The donor, an alumnus to random mailboxes.

In Heidebrink’s words, “He just wants to make a difference in a few strangers’ lives.”

by David Gutche ‘11

Marriages


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Investing in Moldova

As a former member of Northwestern’s baseball team, our son visited Moldova several summers ago and came home with a passion for the small Eastern European country that touched our hearts too. He’d learned about microfinance and was enthusiastic about its potential for empowering people who are poor to start their own small businesses. Our son and his coach at the time, Dave Nonnemacher, encouraged my husband and me to visit Moldova and consider how we might become involved.

We didn’t really want to go, but the encouragement just kept coming—from our son, his coach and, I guess, the Holy Spirit. That’s how, one summer, we found ourselves on a trip to Moldova, hosted by Invest-Credit, a microfinance organization.

Fifty years of communism have left their mark on Moldova. We stayed in a Soviet efficiency apartment building, where staircases are lit by one dim light bulb and children climb on rusty playground equipment in dirty courtyards littered with cigarette butts. We strolled through villages where drinking water is drawn from a community well and corn for livestock is shucked by hand.

We saw desperate young women, willing to be exploited sexually in exchange for a ticket out of Moldova. I was astounded when my husband, noticeably a foreigner, was approached by a woman who said, “You are a nice man; I would marry you.” Abandoned by their Russian rulers after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Moldovans were left with little resource wealth and barely any knowledge of self-governance. Communism had stripped Moldovans of their self-worth, self reliance and political wherewithal, creating a profoundly dependent society. In fact, Soviet governance succeeded unusually well in Moldova because a history of subservience already haunted the country. Before communism, Moldovans had rarely experienced the societal stability many of their neighboring countries remembered and yearned for because a history of subservience already haunted the country.

Moldovans’ last 20 years of post-communism have also been years of hardship. As we met with both political leaders and international investors, it became clear this is still a society in a state of crisis. Members of the older generation long for the sustenance of the iron-fisted Soviet regime, while younger Moldovans have glimpsed the fruits of independence and economic entrepreneurship via their televisions, computers and cell phones.

My husband was intrigued with the question of where development efforts should be focused in this country. Should the first priority be a stable government, a system of transportation, cultivation of Moldova’s fertile soil, or outside investment leading to increased employment? I was captivated by observing the development of a new society both through governance and societal evolution. We wondered what more can be done and how quickly? As visitors from the wealthiest nation on earth, were there roles for us in Moldova’s emergence?

During the months following our trip, these questions fermented and led to others: Could we start by enabling just one Moldovan young person to be educated in ethical business and governing principles—principles he or she could take back to Moldova and put into practice? And could that education happen on a campus filled with diverse, welcoming, trustworthy individuals of high integrity? Could we establish a four-year scholarship that would enable one Moldovan student to graduate from Northwestern, a place we knew would encourage the values Moldova so desperately needs?

Our “Moldovan investment,” Cristina Bodarev, started at Northwestern last fall. She’s a business administration major from the capital city of Chisinau. We trust God is surrounding her with the right people and directing her steps at Northwestern. She’s a business administration major from the capital city of Chisinau. We trust God is surrounding her with the right people and directing her steps at Northwestern. Should the first priority be a stable government? I was captivated by observing the development of a new society both through governance and societal evolution. We wondered what more can be done and how quickly? As visitors from the wealthiest nation on earth, were there roles for us in Moldova’s emergence?

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If you would like to contribute to the Moldovan Study Scholarship established by the writer and her husband, contact Cornie Wassink in the advancement office, 712-707-7100 or cwassink@nwciowa.edu.
Tickets went on sale at 4 p.m., and within a few minutes, all six shows were sold out. RUSH, begun in 2003 and named for the adrenaline surge that accompanies dancing, is one of the most popular foot-stompin’ events on campus.

For RUSH 2012 in February, more than 220 students performed 16 dances, including jazz, hip-hop, lyrical and steam punk.

Dancers came from all corners of campus: artists and athletes, bookworms and class clowns, students who’d had music or dance lessons and those for whom clapping to the beat requires concentration.

The dances featured original choreography by Northwestern students who then auditioned their peers and rehearsed with them until they were ready to take the stage as rhythmic wonders.